

Ticket to Work/Work Incentives Improvement Act
Medicaid Infrastructure Grant
Advisory Group

Meeting Minutes
April 17, 2003

Members in Attendance:

Tracy DuPree, Nevada State Welfare Division
Lisa Erquiaga, Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living/Fallon Office
Robert "Red" Foster, General Public
Terry Hardy, General Public
William Heavilin, Nevada Disability Advocacy & Law Center
Robin Renshaw, Nevada Parents Encouraging Parents
Robert Simola, Ormsby ARC

Members Not in Attendance:

Nina Davenport, National Multiple Sclerosis Society/Las Vegas Office
Paul Gowins, Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living
Alyce Thomas, Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services
Kimberli Varé, The Skill Builders of Nevada
Gillian Wells, Nevada Parents Encouraging Parents

Staff:

Jean Laird, Program Manager
Mary Jackson, Southern Nevada Program Specialist
Linda James, Rural Program Specialist

Others Present:

Kitti Barth, Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities
Bonnie Dixon, Nevada Disability Advocacy & Law Center

I. Roll Call – Housekeeping

Linda James began the meeting by calling roll. It was determined that a quorum was present. The meeting was turned over to Robert Simola, Cochair.

Ms. James introduced Jean Laird who is temporarily taking over John Alexander's duties on a quarter to half time basis. Mrs. Laird is retired from the State of Nevada and is a contract employee. Her last position with the State was as Deputy Administrator with the Division of Mental Health and Developmental Services. She also was an Administrative Services Officer with the Welfare Division. Since retirement Mrs. Laird has worked two sessions with the Legislature and has done contract work in three positions with the Division of Health Care Financing and Policy.

Mr. Simola read a letter of resignation from Gillian Wells and gave a copy to each individual present.

II. March Meeting Minutes Approval

Robert Simola asked the group for any changes or corrections to the minutes. Mr. Simola requested that the name of his employer be changed from "Ormsby Association for Retarded Citizens" to its correct name, "Ormsby ARC". Tracy DuPree proposed a motion for the minutes to be accepted with Mr. Simola's corrections. Robert "Red" Foster seconded the motion. **The motion carried unanimously.**

III. Staff Projects Status Update

a. Section 1619 Outreach

Linda James reported that the 1619 survey letter sent to approximately 14,000 adult SSI/Medicaid recipients was mailed on March 3, 2003. As of this date, we have received roughly 500 responses. The closing date was March 31, 2003. However, we are still receiving completed surveys daily. Mary Jackson and Linda James should have all data input completed next week. At that time Mrs. Jackson will do the necessary queries to determine whether there is enough interest in having consumer trainings on 1619 throughout the State.

b. "Ticket Team" Brochure for Consumers – Development Update

Mary Jackson handed out the first draft of the Ticket to Work consumer brochure Anita Puentes is developing for the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG) Advisory Group. Three to four sections have not yet been written. Because of the amount of information the brochure will be a handbook instead. It is currently written at a 7.9 grade level, but will need to be reduced to a 6.0 grade level.

The distribution strategy for the handbook was also discussed. At the monthly Ticket Team meeting on April 14, 2003, the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation reported that they will be contacting Mrs. Puentes to discuss what their agency will be able to do regarding distribution of the handbook. Collaboration with one of Nevada's Employment Networks was also discussed regarding the possibility of a mass mailing to all Ticket recipients in coordination with the MIG Advisory Group. Mrs. Jackson stated that each member of the Ticket Team is identifying how each agency will distribute the handbook. Distribution to service providers will be addressed in the future. The MIG Advisory Group's initial distribution recommendations will be included in the distribution plan. The final distribution plan and timeline will be presented as soon as they are completed.

Mrs. Jackson also discussed printing of the handbook. Due to the high volume needed, the handbooks will be sent out for printing.

Tracy DuPree, Robert "Red" Foster and Robert Simola requested that both the MIG and HIWA logos be put on the handbook. Mrs. Jackson will try to incorporate them. Jean Laird suggested a "produced by" area so people will know how to obtain copies. Linda James suggested adding language regarding requiring permission to make copies of the

handbook or to reproduce it in anyway. Anita Puentes stated that her “only concern is that people take some of the information and then add or subtract other information.” Mrs. Puentes does not want false information disseminated. It was decided that there be a “produced by” with a contact for more information and permission to duplicate “as is” along with a development date. Bonnie Dixon, National Disability Advocacy and Law Center, suggested a line that reads, “please copy in its entirety.”

c. “Partners for Profits” Conference

Kitti Barth, Administrator with the Governor’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (GCEPD), reported that her agency has been working diligently on this upcoming conference and they now have an outline. Input of the survey is not yet completed, but the results so far indicate that last year’s attendees want to know more about the Ticket to Work Program and employing people with disabilities. Responses also indicate that attendees are willing to attend an all-day training. Tentative dates are October 7 in Reno and October 9 in Las Vegas. The conference’s title is T & T which stands for Ticket & Technology. Mrs. Barth has contacted last year’s speaker, Richard Pimentel, to be the speaker at the morning session. Human Resource managers give CEUs at any conference where Mr. Pimentel speaks. The afternoon session’s speaker is tentatively Susan Daniels, the “godmother” of the Ticket to Work legislation.

At this year’s conferences, the awards ceremony will be held in both locations. An addition to this year’s program is an exposition entitled “Easter Seals Assistive Technology Expo.” The national level of Crossroads contacted Mrs. Barth requesting to develop and sponsor the exposition. Tables would also be offered to all the Coalition of Employing Nevada’s Training Services (CENTS) members. Employers will then be able to see available technologies as well as training services to prepare individuals for employment in our state.

A tentative schedule is:

8:00 a.m.	Registration
9:00 a.m.	Speaker: Richard Pimentel
11:00 a.m.	Cameos: Individuals who have successfully transitioned to employment or who are following their educational goals toward employment.
12:00 p.m.	Governor’s Awards Luncheon & Presentation. Awards will again be given to outstanding employee and employer of the year. Awards will also be given to the service provider organization of the year and the service provider person of the year. These awards will be given to recipients from both northern and southern Nevada. The awards will be followed by some type of entertainment.
1:30 p.m.	Ticket Team presentation
2:00 p.m.	Speaker: Susan Daniels
3:00 p.m.	2 Break Out Sessions. Break out sessions will be targeted toward how to become an employment network and how to complete the Request for Proposal. Also included will be how to do the Individual Work Plans (IWP’s) for participating consumers. The other session will cover networking opportunities. Individuals who do not wish to attend either of the break out sessions can visit the exposition and/or attend the planned reception to be held later in the afternoon.

Mrs. Barth just completed training on how to become an employment network for the MGM/Mirage Group in Las Vegas. They comprise ten casinos. Mrs. Barth has also

spoken to the MGM regarding hosting the “Partners for Profits” Conference in their facility and underwriting as much of the cost as they can.

Mrs. Barth reported that Easter Seals for Nevada, formerly Nevada Association for the Handicap, and Opportunity Village, both located in Las Vegas, have offered to partner with the Governor’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities to be the conference events planners. Opportunity Village is expecting to make a profit. As a result, they are taking on some of the expenses such as printing and mailing. They will also add their mailing list, which includes people like Steve Wynn.

Mrs. Barth reported that she came to today’s advisory group meeting to ask the members to make a commitment to fund the speakers. Richard Pimentel’s fee is \$2,500 per day and he pays his own travel and other expenses. His fee for two days will be \$5,000. Susan Daniels is in Washington, D.C. She is in need of a traveling assistant which will be her husband, John. He is with the Office of Disability Employment Policy and serves with the Veterans Administration. Mrs. Daniels’ fee is \$3,500 per day plus travel for herself and her husband. If the MGM hosts the conference in Las Vegas, Mrs. Barth believes their hotel room will be included at no cost.

Jean Laird requested that Mrs. Barth send DHCFP a summary in writing with all the details. Linda James asked what kind of a timeline the division can give Mrs. Barth once the necessary information is received. Mrs. Laird responded, “I would say at least two weeks after we get the written proposal.”

Robert Simola recommended that the MIG Advisory Group support Mrs. Barth’s proposal with the “Partners for Profits” conference. Mr. Simola feels that since the MIG Advisory Group supported the conference last year and it was successful that it should be supported again.

Lisa Erquiaga made a motion that the MIG Advisory Group lend “our support to the conference and, if we have the money, that we agree to pay for the speakers which will cost a total of approximately \$13,000 for both the North and the South. We also agree to lend our support to Kitti Barth with whatever support she needs.” The motion was seconded by Tracy DuPree. **The motion passed with one abstention by William Heavilin.**

d. HIWA Automated Support Development

Mary Jackson reported that we are currently waiting on approval of the HIWA Program from the Legislature. The chart regarding the sub-payment premium system and the outline on how the system will operate are completed. The HIWA Business Flow Chart from the time the application is submitted with the Welfare Division and how it goes through the system is also completed. The process has also been charted for an on-going case for a client who has been approved for the HIWA program.

Mrs. Jackson reported that the MIG Advisory Group will be given all this information if approval of HIWA is received from the Legislature.

One component John Alexander was unable to finish is the disability review. Mrs. Jackson reminded the group members that they had made a recommendation for

the development of a disability review team. This particular issue has not been worked out at this time.

Jean Laird reported that she has received a report from the State Department of Information Technology (DoIT) regarding the preparation of the interfacing with the NOMADS system. If DoIT starts the work in June the interface will not be completed until December 8, 2003. This will affect the implementation date of the program.

IV. Legislative Strategy

a. Advisory Group Members' Educational Contacts with Legislators

Linda James reported that Robert Simola and William Heavilin approved a draft of a letter to the members of the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means from each MIG Advisory Group member. Four group members requested Mrs. James print their letters and send them to the advisory group member for signature with stamped envelopes.

Jean Laird commented that if members are going to send a letter, they do it right away. The Legislature is beginning to close budgets. There is a possibility that the program will not look exactly as the advisory group recommended. In early March, the Legislative Counsel Bureau asked questions about the resource maximum and whether or not to consider family income. This week additional questions were received. One asked DHCFP to reevaluate caseload projections. That was completed. There was a group of individuals that should not have been included in the initial estimate of potentially eligible consumers. That was corrected. We adjusted the percentage of persons who could be eligible and would actually apply and enter the program up from 7.9% to 10% based on some new information updates. In addition, the base numbers that were used were the counts for people on SSDI in December 2000 for these income groups. We updated these numbers to the December 2001 numbers that are now available and added a factor for population growth. The net result of that calculation was a reduction in the estimate of 46 people from 638 to 592 who would be expected to participate by the end of the first year of the program. The second item asked about was the fiscal impact of changing the premium amount from 5% of earned income to 7.5% of earned income. That calculation was completed. We were also asked about the implementation date and whether or not it was still reasonable. As we have already discussed, it is impossible. October 2003 is not going to happen. I think January 2004 is out of the question. April is optimistic and July is more likely. We suggested that the program could start in April. The actual net effect of that was a reduction of approximately two million dollars in general funds. The fiscal staff in the division was asked yesterday to calculate the impact of that 13% reduction in the number of people based on counting the family income. I don't know the effect of that yet, but it could be approximately another \$300,000 reduction.

As soon as the division receives word of program approval we will be recruiting for a new program manager. Also, Connie Anderson wanted to be here, but her schedule did not allow it. She also asked me to encourage all of you to contact either me or her if you need help or have any questions. Connie is deaf so the best way to contact her is

through her e-mail. Her address is canderson@dhcfp.state.nv.us. My e-mail address is jlaird@dhcfp.state.nv.us.

Mrs. Laird also commented that she is “very pleasantly surprised that the HIWA program is still on the table. This is a credit to the MIG Advisory Group, advocates and the division.”

V. Advisory Group Vacancy

Linda James reported that before today the MIG Advisory Group had one vacancy. Two people’s names have been turned in as possible candidates. We now have two vacancies. The Advisory Group members may want to submit more names. William Heavilin reported that he and Robert Simola received a letter from Gary Olsen, Director of the Nevada Association of the Deaf, Inc. Mr. Heavilin feels it may be a good idea to consider having someone on the MIG Advisory Group who has a hearing impairment. Linda James reported that because both positions on the Advisory Group are in the southern part of Nevada individuals must reside in that area. Robin Renshaw has turned in one name and Mary Jackson has turned in the name of an individual who has worked with Medicaid on a volunteer basis who has a lot of knowledge of this division. Kitti Barth reported that the MIG Advisory Group might want to contact Linda Waymen with the Clark County School District’s Special Education Curriculum Planning Program. Ms. Waymen is the past president of the Nevada Association of the Deaf and is herself hard of hearing. She has also served on the Governor’s Ticket Plan and lives in Las Vegas.

Discussion followed on the letter received from Mr. Olsen regarding drafting a response. While Mr. Olsen resides in the Carson City area he may like to recommend someone to be interviewed to fill one of the MIG Advisory Group vacancies. In addition, in his letter Mr. Olsen expressed concerns regarding communication among groups at the recent Legislative Reception. It was also discussed that a draft of the letter would be sent to all groups/agencies who participated in the Legislative Reception. Tracy DuPree moved that MIG staff draft a letter of response. It was seconded by Robert “Red” Foster. **The motion passed unanimously.**

VI. New Business

a. Workplace Personal Assistance brochure

Linda James reported that the Workplace Personal Assistance brochure is one published by American Public Human Services Association (APHSA), our technical advisory group for the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant. John Alexander wanted me to bring this to the MIG Advisory Group’s attention. We want to see whether group members would like to use this brochure. Items to consider include what groups should have and/or need this brochure; how it should be marketed; and additional ways to use the brochure. An electronic copy has been requested from APHSA so the State Printing Division could print as many as needed. As of today, however, an electronic copy is not available. Mary Jackson reminded the group of our objective to educate Personal Care Aides (PCA) providers and employers on PCA services at work sites.

Lisa Erquiaga made a motion that this item be put on next month's agenda to be revisited with updated information. Tracy DuPree seconded the motion. **The motion passed unanimously.**

b. Employment Network Summit

Linda James reported on an upcoming conference hosted by the Ticket to Work Advisory Panel in Washington, D.C. on May 22 and 23, 2003, called the "Employment Network Summit." Conference attendees will be exploring new ideas in order to make employment networks more successful than they have been. One item to be covered is more and better payment systems as many potential employment networks are not completing a contract because of the lag time in the current payment systems. Ticket holders are also being included in this conference. Robert Simola has asked me to gather the information to see whether the MIG would be able to pay for his costs. A round trip airline ticket from Reno, Nevada to Washington, D.C. is approximately \$578. Per diem is \$90 per day for 3 ½ days. Mr. Simola would leave on May 21, 2003 and return on May 24, 2003. He would need a hotel for three nights. No special conference rate is available. Room rates are approximately \$170 per night plus tax. Transportation would include mileage to and from the Reno Airport and transportation from the airport in Washington, D.C. to the hotel. Transportation costs would be approximately \$100. Total cost for the four day trip for Mr. Simola would be approximately \$1,278. Mr. Simola would give a full conference report to the MIG Advisory Group upon return. Tracy Dupree moved that the MIG Advisory Group send Robert Simola to the Employment Network Summit. The motion was seconded by Lisa Erquiaga. **The motion passed unanimously.**

c. May 15, 2003 Advisory Group Meeting

Linda James reported the May's monthly advisory group meeting will be on May 15, 2003. Both Mary Jackson and Mrs. James will be out of town attending a conference. There is a second conflict as May 15 is also the date of the Ticket Team's presentation at Northern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services. Tracy DuPree made a motion to change May's meeting date from May 15 to May 22, 2003. Robert "Red" Foster seconded the motion. **The motion passed unanimously.**

d. Letter of Appreciation to John Alexander

Robert Simola reported that he worked with Mary Jackson and Linda James to have a certificate of appreciation completed for Mr. Alexander. Mr. Simola displayed the framed certificate to all those present. Discussion followed on a letter of appreciation to Mr. Alexander to accompany the certificate. The letter is to be signed by all advisory group members. Each member is to send his/her signature to Linda James so it can be electronically added to the completed letter. Mr. Simola stated that he would like to see the letter thank Mr. Alexander for his dedication and excellence in his performance with the MIG Advisory Group and all people with disabilities. Tracy DuPree made a motion that a letter of appreciation be done and signed by all advisory group members. Lisa Erquiaga seconded the motion. **The motion passed unanimously.**

VII. Group Report

a. Gillian Wells – Transition Forum

As Gillian Wells has resigned from the MIG Advisory Group, Robin Renshaw reported that he will present the Transition Forum group report at future monthly meetings.

VIII. Public Comment Period

There were no additional public comments during this time.

IX. Adjournment

Robert “Red” Foster moved the meeting be adjourned. Tracy DuPree seconded the motion. **The motion passed unanimously.**